CLAIMS

1. An electronic commerce system for communicating with purchasers via a client machine connected to a global computer network, the system comprising:

    a. a server for receiving and processing orders placed remotely by the purchaser, each order comprising a product;

    b. a database, accessible to the server, comprising a record identifying (i) the purchaser, (ii) a plurality of contacts designated by the purchaser, and (iii) contact information facilitating communication with the contacts;

    c. instructions executable on the client machine for rendering an interface thereon, the interface facilitating (i) designation of the order, (ii) designation of at least one of the contacts, and (iii) entry of a message pertaining to the order; and

    d. a network interface for transmitting the rendering instructions to the client machine via the network,

wherein

    e. the server is responsive to the interface so as to (i) facilitate fulfillment of the order and (ii) transmit the message to the at least one designated contact, the server further monitoring whether the

20   at least one designated contact subsequently purchases the product

21   to facilitate reward of the purchaser.

22

1   2. The system of claim 1 wherein the product is selected from a catalog of

2   products comprising goods, services, or goods and services.

3

1   3. The system of claim 1 wherein the client machine is configured to display

2   the interface and to transmit to the server purchaser selections thereon.

3

1   4. The system of claim 1 wherein the purchaser's database record further

2   comprises a data identifying a credit-card account, processing of the order

3   including charging the account.

4

1   5. The system of claim 1 wherein the server is configured to check for credit

2   entries in the purchaser's database record when processing the purchaser's

3   order and to adjust the order based on any located entries.

4

1   6. The system of claim 1 wherein the interface accepts the message after

2   the order has been fulfilled.

3

1   7. The system of claim 1 wherein the interface accepts the message with

2   the order.

3

1   8. An electronic commerce system for communicating with a user via a client

2   machine connected to a global computer network, the system comprising:

3   a. a server;

4   b. a database, accessible to the server, comprising a record identifying

5   (i) the user, (ii) a plurality of contacts designated by the user, and

6   (iii) contact information facilitating communication with the

7   contacts;

8   c. instructions executable on the client machine for rendering an

9   interface thereon, the interface facilitating (i) selection of at least

10   one product from a list of products embedded in or accessed by

11   execution of the instructions, (ii) designation of at least one of the

12   contacts, and (iii) entry of a message pertaining to the at least one

13   selected product; and

14   d. a network interface for transmitting the rendering instructions to the

15   client machine via the network,

16   wherein

17   e. the server is responsive to the interface so as to transmit the

18   message to the at least one designated contact.

19

9. The system of claim 8 wherein the server is configured to monitor

2   whether the at least one designated contact subsequently purchases the item

3   to facilitate reward of the user.

4

1   10. The system of claim 8 wherein the list of products comprises goods,

2   services, or goods and services.

3

1   11. The system of claim 10 wherein the list of products is embedded in the

2   instructions.

3

1   12. The system of claim 10 wherein the list of products is stored in a

2   computer accessible over the network, the instructions comprising an

3   address facilitating access to the list by the client computer.

4

1   13. The system of claim 8 wherein the client machine is configured to

2   display the interface and to transmit to the server (i) the list of products, (ii)

3   the at least one designated contact, and (iii) the message.

4

1   14. The system of claim 8 wherein the server is further configured to

2   process orders for products, the server checking for credit entries in the

3   user's database record when processing an order from the user and to adjust

4   the order based on any located entries.

5

1   15. A method of facilitating referral-based electronic commerce, the method

2   comprising the steps of:

3   a. receiving and processing orders placed remotely by a purchaser via

4   a client machine connected to a global computer network, each

5   order comprising a product;

6   b. storing a record identifying (i) the purchaser, (ii) a plurality of

7   contacts designated by the purchaser, and (iii) contact information

8   facilitating communication with the contacts;

9   c. causing the client machine to render an interface, the interface

10   facilitating (i) designation of the order, (ii) designation of at least one

11   of the contacts, and (iii) entry of a message pertaining to the order;

12   d. fulfilling the order;

13   e. transmitting the message to the at least one designated contact;

14   and

15   f. monitoring whether the at least one designated contact

16   subsequently purchases the product and, if so, rewarding the

17   purchaser.

18

1   16. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of supplying a

2   catalog of products comprising goods, services, or goods and services, the

3   product being selected from the catalog.

4

1   17. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of storing, in the

2   purchaser's record, data identifying a credit-card account, processing of the

3   order including charging the account.

4

1   18. The method of claim 17 wherein the server is configured to check for

2   credit entries in the purchaser's database record when processing the

3   purchaser's order and to adjust the order based on any located entries.

4

1   19. A method of facilitating referral-based electronic commerce, the method

2   comprising the steps of:

3   a. communicating with a user via a client machine connected to a

4   global computer network;

5   b. storing a record identifying (i) the user, (ii) a plurality of contacts

6   designated by the user, and (iii) contact information facilitating

7   communication with the contacts;

8   c. causing the client machine to render an interface, the interface

9   facilitating (i) selection of at least one product from a list of

10   products embedded in or accessed by execution of the instructions,

11   (ii) designation of at least one of the contacts, and (iii) entry of a

12   message pertaining to the at least one selected product; and

13   d. transmitting the message to the at least one designated contact.

14

1   20. The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of monitoring

2   whether the at least one designated contact subsequently purchases the item

3   and, if so, rewarding the user.

4

109140-2   23

1 21. The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of supplying a

2 catalog of products comprising goods, services, or goods and services, the

3 product being selected from the catalog.

4

1 22. The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of storing, in the

2 user's record, data identifying a credit-card account, and further comprising

3 the step of processing of an order from the user for a product, the processing

4 step including charging the account.

5

1 23. The method of claim 22 wherein the server is configured to check for

2 credit entries in the user's database record when processing the user's order

3 and to adjust the order based on any located entries.

4

1 24. The method of claim 22 wherein the message is entered and transmitted

2 after the order has been fulfilled.

3

1 25. The method of claim 22 wherein the message is entered and transmitted

2 with the order.

3

4